

Open World Alumni



NATALIA BURDUJA

Integration Counselor

Romanian National Council For
Refugees, Suceava

Refugee Integration Tools
Des Moines, IA
October 2022



Natalia's current professional activity involves advising on the integration of Ukrainian refugees in the following areas: temporary protection, asylum procedure, education, medicine, social benefits, jobs, accommodation, cash assistance, etc.

She consider that 'as long as you live, you learn and improve yourself'.



"My first experience in the United States of America was a special one, to the people who made it all possible. I had the honor of spending 10 days in Washington D.C. and Des Moines, Iowa. I had the chance to discover American culture and the art of conversation, which I possess. Thank you Open World Leadership Center, U.S. Embassy Bucharest, American Councils for International Education-Romania and last but not least the Iowa International Center that hosted us in Des Moines."



CONGRESSIONAL OFFICE FOR
INTERNATIONAL
LEADERSHIP



Open World Alumni



DANIELA TIRON

Community Organizer &
Communication Officer

"Rădăuțiul Civic" Association, Suceava

Refugee Integration Tools
Des Moines, IA
October 2022



Through her activity at Rădăuțiul Civic, Daniela's main focus is the wellbeing of others - providing both knowledge, experience, and finding necessary resources. Besides volunteering at the Ukrainian border in Siret, in the past months, their work has been concentrated on providing basic needs help for people entering the country, as well as organizing transports beyond the border, to city councils, local non-governmental associations, and hospitals. Daniela and the team attended meetings between authorities and non-governmental organizations to discuss organizational details, needs, and solutions for constant and more efficient coordination, with the purpose of having a greater impact on the Ukrainian refugees.



"Participating in the Open World program is an experience that has no comparison. If we can visit the United States of America on a tourist visa, we certainly won't have access to the experience of the grassroots American lifestyle, in the heart of a community willing to share all that the culture and the country means to them. I am grateful for the opportunity to be part of the second Romanian delegation in the Open World program and I hope that the experience gained there will be translated through new activities implemented at the Rădăuțiul Civic association."



CONGRESSIONAL OFFICE FOR
INTERNATIONAL
LEADERSHIP



ROMANIA



Open World Alumni



LIVIA POPA

Legal Counselor

**Romanian National Council For
Refugees, Bucharest**

**Refugee Integration Tools
Des Moines, IA
October 2022**



As a legal counselor for CNRR, the main focus of Livia's activity is to make sure that the asylum procedure of the beneficiaries is respected and that they can effectively use all the remedies and all the rights they are granted with by law. Besides that, her mission is to make asylum-seekers really understand the procedure, what are their rights and how they can benefit of them, as well as what are their obligations and consequences of their actions. Information empowers them and initiates their integration process. In order to do that, in her counseling sessions Livia is constantly seeking to make the legal language accessible for the beneficiaries, to offer concise information and to establish a trustworthy relation. Another important part of her activity consists of organizing trainings and debates on legal and practical matters.



"It was an intense experience that exceeded my expectations in many ways. I feel extremely lucky and grateful that Open World gave me this chance. Both professionally, but above all personally, I feel that this experience planted good seeds in me that will be seen in time. I have all the admiration for the fine and professional people from the American Councils and the Iowa International Center, who worked hard, and then they were up to the task. I wish you strength and energy, to please as many people as possible with wonderful programs!"



CONGRESSIONAL OFFICE FOR
INTERNATIONAL
LEADERSHIP



ROMANIA



Open World Alumni

BIANCA IONESCU

Legal Counselor

Romanian National Council For Refugees, Bucharest

Refugee Integration Tools Des Moines, IA October 2022

Bianca began to work at the Romanian National Council for Refugees right before the war in Ukraine started. This generated a large influx of refugees in Romania and she learned to adapt at an alert pace in order to be able to provide the Ukrainian refugees information that could help them in this crisis situation.

She assist the people in need, she try to identify their needs and look for solutions: she offer them legal counseling about their rights and obligations, Bianca help them contest the decisions if their asylum request is rejected, she research information from their countries of origin and she refer them to lawyers, social workers or to institutions or organizations that can help them in their specific problems. Her mission is to be a factor that has a positive effect on the struggle that refugees go through, as her ultimate goal is to help the world that we live in become a better, safer and kinder place.

"The Open World experience makes you 'think big': to have courage and want to grow, give more, open your mind to new concepts and strengthen your community spirit. I met people who were professional and human in equal measure, and the host family made me feel at home and gave me an authentic American experience."



CONGRESSIONAL OFFICE FOR
INTERNATIONAL
LEADERSHIP



ROMANIA



Open World Alumni



ALINA CALISTRU

Community Manager

ANIS – The Romanian Employers Association for the Software Industry, Bucharest

**Refugee Integration Tools
Des Moines, IA
October 2022**



In the last two years Alina's primary professional focus was building communities within the tech industry, making bridges between the tech industry and other actors (public institutions, the non-profit sector, other industries), and within the tech industry sector. Since the beginning of the refugee crisis in Ukraine, she's mediated the relation between The Department for Emergency Situation and the tech industry, in order to identify the right online solution to be used. After the online platform of communication was activated, she was, and still is, one of the three facilitators of a community of almost 600 professionals, representing 250+ NGOs, IGOs, UN structures, local and national authorities.

Alina is running training for new users, activating accounts, co-facilitating general or thematic meetings on the platform, also participating in adding new content and functionalities as needed.



"We are not enough, neither as individuals, nor as organizations or as countries. We are part of something bigger and we need to understand this to be able to build sustainably, to take lateral steps to then take them forward and look at things through the eyes of others. I think that this is the main opportunity of the Open World program and it does very well. It opens up worlds, takes you out of what you know and gives you another perspective and other experiences and people to expose yourself to, from which to learn and extract what you can use to be better, to give more or to think things through a larger scale."



CONGRESSIONAL OFFICE FOR
INTERNATIONAL
LEADERSHIP



ROMANIA

